

SHUTDOWN DUE TO LACK OF LEADERSHIP

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Florida (Mr. MICA) for 5 minutes.

Mr. MICA. Mr. Speaker and my colleagues, why are we here?

We are here because of a failure of leadership. The fact is the President of the United States has failed to negotiate. The fact is the Majority Leader of the Senate, the head of the Senate, has failed and refuses to negotiate.

It's interesting how time changes one's perspective. Let me quote Barack Obama before he became President. These are the words of Barack Obama. He said:

Increasing America's debt weakens us domestically and internationally. Leadership means "the buck stops here." Instead, Washington is shifting the burden of bad choices today onto the backs of our children and grandchildren. America has a debt problem and a failure of leadership. Americans deserve better.

Barack Obama said it very well before he became President. Now he needs to serve and act as President and provide the leadership.

The fact is October 1 is the beginning of the financial year, and we should responsibly fund the government. The fact is, in just a few more days, we will reach \$17 trillion in indebtedness—nearly half of that incurred since Barack Obama has become President. Think about that. They're going to come and ask for another \$1.9 trillion to keep us going for 1 more year. That means in 6 years we will double the debt that's racking up the greatest debt in the history of mankind for any government.

Republicans might like to think that we won the House of Representatives back in 2010 and '95, but it was the same issues: spending, taxes, and health care. Remember HillaryCare and the taxes and other things imposed by President Clinton. The difference is President Clinton negotiated with us. We balanced the budget within 2 years. We can do that if good people of good faith will come together and negotiate, but we can't negotiate by ourselves.

The Constitution empowered the House of Representatives to be in charge of and responsible for levying taxes—because we're closest to the people—and spending. We have that responsibility. They sent us here. They elected us, rejecting the spending that went on. They saw what went on—\$1 trillion more than you took in, spending, the first year of this Presidency, and \$1 trillion since. So we must act responsibly, but we must have leadership starting from the White House, starting from the Senate.

Republicans in the House are ready to negotiate. We were here when the Senate didn't show up on Sunday. They didn't show up to work the day before the 1st of October to fund this current year. We must be here to meet, responsibly, our debt. We can't put that debt, as the President has said before he was

President, on the backs of our children and grandchildren; but we can't do that without the system working. We need leadership—leadership from the President to negotiate, leadership from the Senate to negotiate.

Our leadership has said they will negotiate. We've been here—we'll stay here—but we need to responsibly fund all the activities of government even if it's piece by piece, as we have responsibly done, and sent them over to the other body, and they sit there.

But again, I urge all of the leaders to come together, and my colleagues, particularly the Senate and the President of the United States. We can do responsibly what we need to do, as designated by the Constitution of the United States, and provide that leadership.

MILITARY FAMILY BENEFITS DURING SHUTDOWN

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from North Carolina (Mrs. ELLMERS) for 5 minutes.

Mrs. ELLMERS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to share with this body and the American people a great injustice. A few moments ago, one of my colleagues from Texas, from across the aisle, spoke of this as well. So as you can see, there are many times that we all can come together and agree upon certain items and move the American people forward in a better way; however, this particular situation is unthinkable.

A great injustice is being done to our servicemembers and their families. We learned last night that five brave American servicemembers were killed over the weekend in Afghanistan while selflessly protecting our country. Normally, Mr. Speaker, the loved ones of these fallen warriors receive assistance in the form of benefits to help them make those final arrangements for burial and other necessary preparations. Yet, as a direct result of the political gridlock here in Washington and despite legislation passed in this House last week with great bipartisan support, servicemembers and their families are no longer receiving their benefits.

Mr. Speaker, despite the government shutdown, our servicemembers are still expected to go to war, knowing full well that they may pay the ultimate sacrifice for this great Nation, and we should be expected to keep our promises to their family members. I am working, as we speak, to right this wrong, and I urge all of my colleagues to do the same.

GOVERNMENT SHUTDOWN

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California (Mr. SWALWELL) for 5 minutes.

Mr. SWALWELL of California. Mr. Speaker, I came to Congress to help people, not to hurt people, and this shutdown is hurting innocent Americans.

This past Sunday, I flew back home because Congress was not in session. We were not voting on Sunday, so I took a flight home to California to meet with my constituents in my congressional district.

I held a town hall. I held it at Dublin City Hall. Dublin City Hall is where I served as a city council member. Dublin is also home to many Federal employers. In my congressional district, we have 4,000 Federal employees, plus a number of government contractors who work at Lawrence Livermore and Sandia National Laboratories. I also held it there because, for 2 years as a city council member, I worked in that chamber day in and day out to make sure that we provided a balanced budget. We provided a 2-year budget.

It is so frustrating for me here in the Congress that we provide budgets that are only 45 or 60 days at a time, and across America our city councils are thinking big and thinking forward and balancing their budgets while taking measured investments in the future.

So we gathered the community of California's 15th Congressional District at Dublin City Hall, and we had over 150 people attend. The room was filled with fear and anxiety. Federal workers were in the room, worried about what this was going to mean for the personal incomes, for their families, for their household bills. Even though Federal workers in my district have been furloughed, their bills have not been furloughed. The home lenders are still calling, asking where the mortgages are. Their auto loans are still going to be due. Their credit card statements will still arrive. If they have kids in college, they're still going to have to pay tuition.

The Federal employees told me about the stress that they're living under either by not being able to work or, even worse, by being told that they have to work, but they're not going to receive their paychecks right now. In fact, we were reminded in this very Chamber just last week how stressful that can be, when the Capitol Hill Police, who stand guard here at democracy's door, who protect the people's House, rushed to aid the Members of Congress and the employees who work in this building as an erratic driver drove into a barricaded area just outside the Capitol grounds. Those Capitol Hill police are working to protect us, but they're doing so without pay.

So I heard stories just like that in my congressional district from the employees in our district, who are very scared about what's going to happen next. We learned that this is affecting people who work not just inside government, but also outside government.

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Inside government, we have employees at Camp Parks Reserve Forces Training Area, the NASA facility in Dublin. We also have a women's Federal prison.

Outside government, we have government contract employees—about 6,500